

operate these nursing homes in the 19th Legislative District and I just want to read a portion of that letter to you. It says here, as they interpret the bill, all indications are that it would have a cost to the eight facilities, eight nursing homes that are located in my district, a cost of \$19,200 to comply with this bill. Because of the various percentage each facility has of Medicaid residents the amount borne by the Medicaid program would have been \$9,900 or an average of \$1,238 per facility. Considering that your district is average, the statewide impact for the Medicaid budget in the 208 facilities would be over \$250,000 and here we are talking about trying to keep health costs under control. And so I feel this is just adding the cost and I do have several questions that I would like to ask Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Mr. President, I will yield and hope that we'll get through it soon enough so that we don't burn up my fifteen minutes.

PRESIDENT: Senator, we're running the clock on Senator Hefner. Go ahead, Senator Hefner.

SENATOR HEFNER: Yes, can I ask this question? Okay, on page 2, line 8 it says, "nurse's aides shall mean any person other than a licensed, registered or practical nurse." Does this include or....?

SENATOR HIGGINS: I'm sorry, I can't hear you, Senator.

SENATOR HEFNER: Does this exclude summer employment for college students such as students in the RN program that would like to take a little training?

SENATOR HIGGINS: This bill merely provides that people who work in a nursing home and are going to be taking care of the sick and the elderly will get within ninety days of their employment forty hours of training on how to take care of those people. So if you have students working there, if you are going to have them caring actually for the patients, I would want them to have some training also.

SENATOR HEFNER: Okay, even though they are getting practical experience in their nursing program?

SENATOR HIGGINS: Well, Senator Hefner, I don't believe in using the elderly or the handicapped as guinea pigs so I would have to stay with the bill.

SENATOR HEFNER: Okay, thank you for that answer. And then on page 3 at the bottom of the page, on line 27 it says,